

shared with people everywhere the same need and hope for freedom. This hope overcame the designs of tyrants, and this hope overcame the tragedies of war.

The nations of Central and Eastern Europe are one of history's great examples of the power and appeal of liberty. And we believe that example will be followed and multiplied throughout the world.

Thank you all for coming. May God bless your nations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:38 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Foreign Minister Solomon Pasi of Bulgaria; Foreign Minister Kristiina Ojuland of Estonia; Foreign Minister Sandra Kalniete of Latvia; Foreign Minister Antanas Valionis of Lithuania; Foreign Minister Mircea Dan Geoana of Romania; Foreign Minister Eduard Kukan of Slovakia; and Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel of Slovenia. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of Walter Sisulu *May 8, 2003*

I was saddened to hear of the death of Walter Sisulu in South Africa on May 6, 2003. Walter Sisulu was a man of great moral and strategic vision who committed his life to leading the struggle to end apartheid rule in South Africa. Sisulu was a man of principle and humility whose pursuit of an inclusive, multiracial South Africa never wavered through the 25 years of his imprisonment. Walter Sisulu lived to become a

free man and to see his vision become a reality. He leaves a legacy of courage and conviction for South Africans and all of us who share his belief in the equality of all people.

On behalf of the American people, I extend our deepest sympathies to Mrs. Albertina Sisulu, the Sisulu family, and the people of South Africa.

Statement on Senate Action To Block Votes on the Nominations of Miguel A. Estrada and Priscilla Owen To Be United States Court of Appeals Circuit Judges *May 8, 2003*

Miguel Estrada and Priscilla Owen have been waiting 2 years for an up-or-down vote in the Senate. Both of these nominees are of the highest integrity and character with tremendous legal experience. Both have been unanimously rated "well-qualified" by the American Bar Association. Each has the support of a majority of Senators, yet votes on their nominations are being blocked by a minority of Senators who are engaged in simultaneous filibusters.

These partisan obstructionist tactics are unprecedented, unacceptable, and inconsistent with the Senate's constitutional responsibility.

Because of the Senate's failure to hold timely votes, the number of judicial vacancies has become unacceptably high. When the Federal courts are understaffed, they cannot act in a timely manner to resolve disputes that affect the lives and liberties of Americans.